

One-Time Killer, Typhoid, Still Represents Danger

By K. H. SUTHERLAND, M.D., L. A. County Health Officer
No serious outbreak of typhoid fever has occurred in this country for many years, yet this contagious intestinal disease remains a potential danger. Good sanitation practices in the community and the home keep the disease well under control, but whenever these measures are relaxed typhoid fever becomes a threat. Some 14 cases of typhoid fever were investigated within jurisdiction of the Los Angeles County Health Dept. during

1961. Seven of these cases were found to have contracted the disease in Mexico. Four were infected by a newly discovered carrier, and one case occurred through contact with a known carrier. Only in three cases did health department officials fail to discover the source of infection. Typhoid fever is caused by the typhoid bacillus (Salmonella typhosa) which belongs to a large group of organisms that are capable of producing other forms of illness with symptoms similar to those that

occur in typhoid fever. Some of these bacteria cause serious enteric (intestinal) diseases, while others cause no more than gastrointestinal upsets. THE SOURCE of infection in typhoid fever, as in all enteric diseases, is the bowel and kidney discharges of an infected person. The route of infection is chiefly through drinking water that has been polluted with the disease organisms or by way of milk or other foods that have been contaminated by a typhoid patient or carrier.

In some parts of the world where sanitary controls are lax, local customs make it unsafe to eat raw fruits and vegetables or unpasteurized dairy products. Shellfish may be unfit to eat because the water is polluted with sewage. Typhoid carriers are those individuals who have recovered from typhoid fever but still harbor the disease germs in their bodies, or, in a few cases, persons who have been infected with the typhoid bacilli and yet remain in good health. Carriers are generally over 40 years of age and most of them are women. Many of them are unaware that they carry the disease organisms.

ALL KNOWN carriers are kept under the strict supervision of health department officials, and none are permitted to work around food. Household members are vaccinated against the disease and annual booster doses of vaccine are administered as an extra precaution. After infection with the typhoid bacilli, it usually takes about two weeks for symptoms of illness to appear. Abdominal pain, diarrhea, fever, and headache are common. A rash, generally referred to as "rose spots," may appear on the abdomen and chest. In the classical case of typhoid, barring complications, illness lasts about eight weeks. One attack of the disease usually provides permanent immunity. Treatment with certain of antibiotic drugs is generally successful and has greatly altered the classical course of the disease. Due to their effectiveness the disease is now generally brought under control within a short time, while the mortality has been reduced from about 10 per cent to no more than two or three per cent.

TYPHOID FEVER remains contagious as long as the typhoid bacilli are present in the excreta. About 10 per cent of patients discharge the typhoid organisms for some three months after they become ill, and two to five per cent become permanent carriers. Since typhoid fever is of such infrequent occurrence in the United States, vaccination against it is not generally recommended. When vacationing in rural areas or travelling in other countries, however, there is still a real danger of contracting the disease, and vaccination in these circumstances is strongly recommended. A pamphlet giving additional information on typhoid fever will be mailed to anyone who sends a card of request to the Division of Health Education, Los Angeles County Health Department, 241 N. Figueroa St., Los Angeles 12.

Busy Days For Lodge

June already has been a busy month for the Loyal Order of Moose, Riviera Lodge 1873, Redondo Beach. Members and guests gathered Saturday night for a dance at the lodge hall, 112 1/2 N. Catalina Ave., Redondo Beach. Earlier in the month, June 1 to be exact, the lodge had a Hobo Dance. Prizes went to Don Kelly, "best man bum," and Mrs. Jack Smith, "best woman bum." Appointment of Louis Gundling as secretary was announced at the June 6 meeting. Gundling has been past governor up until this time. Enrollment of new members will take place at the last meeting of the month, June 27.

Who wishes to give himself an abundance of trouble, let him equip these two things: a ship and a woman. No two things involve more bother, for neither is ever sufficiently adorned. —Anonymous

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CHP Drive to Reduce Auto Thefts

The California Highway Patrol is stepping up its efforts to reduce auto thefts and to increase recovery of stolen cars. Patrol Commissioner Brandford M. Crittenden said yesterday. "The California Department of Justice's records show that more than 50,000 vehicles were stolen in California during each of the past two years," Crittenden said. "These thefts cost the people of California more than any other form of crime. Our goal is to help re-

duce this loss to our motorists." Special training of all patrol traffic officers is under way to increase efficiency in recognizing stolen cars, and in conducting investigations in cases where the officers suspect a car has been stolen. THIS TRAINING is designed to speed the recovery of stolen cars as well as to apprehend the thieves. Representatives of the National Auto Theft Bureau are assisting the patrol

in conducting the training program. Supporting the enforcement effort will be a public education program designed to help motorists protect their vehicles from theft. "The auto theft problem is not merely a police problem; it is one in which every car owner has a stake," Crittenden said. "If motorists would learn not to leave their keys in their cars, thefts would be reduced considerably."

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